REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 27-28, 54 and 56 are amended without prejudice or disclaimer.

Rejection of Claims 1 and 28 Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and submit that claims 1 and 28 are sufficiently particular and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention.

The Office Action asserts that the confusion is to the phrase "and are associated" because it creates a multiple meaning sentence and therefore, makes the claim indefinite. Applicants note that the Office Action also requests specification support for this limitation. Applicants point the Examiner to page 6 in which the application notes that "in many situations of interest, the appropriate machine response depends not only on the spoken input but also on the state of the environment. In other words, the invention described below concerns devices with multi-sensory inputs (linguistic and visual) including verbal, non-verbal, and multi-modal inputs. Page 6 continues to discuss illustrative utterances from the database which include such things as "charge this to my home phone", "I was just disconnected from this number" and so forth. The meaning of the phrase in claim 1 in the context of the teachings in the specification, especially on page 6, may be illustrated easily by an example. If a user has a device which presents on a screen three different phone calls that were made and enables the user to provide non-verbal input (such as multimodal gesture input) to identify or circle using a touch sensitive screen one of the three phones calls, then the user could say "charge this to my home phone" while in a

substantially simultaneous fashion circle one of the three phone calls that were made. In this regard, the verbal input "charge this to my home phone" and the non-verbal input (circling on a touch sensitive screen one phone call of three phone calls that were made) are multimodal inputs that are "associated with a coordinated message".

One of skill in the art would understand in terms of multimodal interaction with users that the multiple mechanisms of providing input are efficient because they are associated with a coordinated message and convey different information. For example, the verbal communication instructs the system that the user wants to charge something to their home phone number. The non-verbal input through the touch sensitive screen identifies which phone call to charge to their home phone. Thus, they convey different information and are associated with a coordinated message. Finally, line 5 of page 6 states that "the appropriate machine response depends not only on the spoken input but also on the state of the environment. In other words, the invention described below concerns devices with multi-sensory inputs (linguistic and visual) including verbal, non-verbal and multimodal inputs." Thus, the concept that the verbal and non-verbal input achieves an appropriate response is taught on page 6 of the Office Action. Accordingly, discussing this example illustrates that claims 1 and 28 are not confusing and do particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter with regards to the invention. Therefore, Applicants request withdrawal of the requester.

Rejection of Claims 1-3, 7, 9-13, 15-30, 34-40, 42-54 and 56-57 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 7, 9-13, 15-30, 24-40, 42-54 and 56-57 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Beyda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,487,277) ("Beyda et al."). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, but also provide a minor amendment that distinguishes the present claim set from Beyda et al.

Applicants note that the primary portion cited to reject these claims are column 7 and column 8 in which the user is enabled to move around the hierarchical prompt level in the IVR system. For example, column 7, lines 12-30 discuss that the user can press a # or a * key at the prompt while the prompt is being delivered to jump to the next prompt. "Alternatively, the user may speak 'next'." Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that column 7 fails to teach the present invention because there is no teaching of providing verbal and non-verbal input in a substantially simultaneous fashion. This is because this portion of the reference teaches that the user may either press a key or, in the alternative, may speak the word "next" to jump to a next prompt.

Column 8 also teaches a similar concept to column 7 in which the user can provide navigation through a coordinated menu of prompts. Lines 35-37 teach that the user may press (*) followed by 2 or say "back, 2" in order to return from prompt level 3 after prompt level 1. The entire disclosure and invention of Beyda et al. relies on the concept of menu driven prompts. The present invention differs from the menu prompt system of Beyda et al. To further clarify this distinction, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that the automated task classification system operates on a task objective of a user through a natural language dialog with the user in which the system prompts are not ordered in a menu. Applicants note that the present invention is implemented in the context of a natural language dialog as is illustrated on page 4 of the present specification. For example, line 20 discusses how a call first accesses the system by being presented with a greeting such as "How may I help you". After the caller responds to that greeting with a natural speech statement of the callers objective, the system is able to either classify the callers request to one of a number of predefined objective routings to implement that routing, or to transfer that caller to an operator where their request did not fit one of the predefined objective routings or the system was unable to understand the callers request.

Applicants note that there are substantial differences between a natural language dialog with a user and the restrictive prompt menu system disclosed in Beyda et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that one of skill in the art would easily recognize that the differences between the natural language verbal and non-verbal input that are associated with a coordinated message that receives an appropriate response in the context of a natural language dialog system. Furthermore, Applicants note that the Abstract of Beyda et al. explain that "the prompts are typically presented in a predetermined order. However, the IVR system (101) improves the presentation by adjusting the presentation order based on a caller pattern or prompt selection." Thus, the entire invention of Beyda et al. is not applicable to natural language dialog system in which there is not a predetermined order of prompts and thus, the entire concept of being able to press a key or speaking a word such as "next" or pressing a key followed by a 2 or saying "back, 2" would make no sense in the context of a natural language dialog system because there is no need or no context in which a user needs to navigate through a menu of a predetermined order of prompts. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that because the present claims expressly exclude a menu prompting system, Beyda et al. actually teach away from the present invention. Applicants submit that the present claim set if patentable and in condition for allowance.
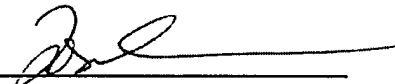
Similar amendments are made to each independent claim and therefore, each independent claim and claims dependent therefrom are patentable and in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Having addressed all rejections and objections, Applicants respectfully submit that the

subject application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If necessary, the Commissioner for Patents is authorized to charge or credit the **Novak, Druce &**

Quigg, LLP, Account No. 14-1437 for any deficiency or overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____

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